

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms



ATF NEWS



DETROIT FIELD DIVISION

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For Immediate Release

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ATF and The Detroit Tigers Organization Team Up for Kids' Sake

DETROIT - Michael W. Morrissey, Division Director for the Detroit Field Division of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) is proud to announce that on **Tuesday, May 30th, 2000, at 7:05 PM** the Detroit Tigers are stepping up to the plate to help combat violence and gangs. The Detroit Tigers will be playing their **fifth annual G.R.E.A.T. ball game** against the **Texas Rangers**. The Tigers' Management dedicates one game a year to the G.R.E.A.T. kids. It is the Tiger's way of supporting the students in their quest to remain gang and violence free.

The game this year will be played on behalf of an estimated **3,500 kids** who are expected to attend the night game. The honorees are children who have graduated, or are currently receiving lessons, under the **Gang Resistance Education And Training Program** offered throughout several Michigan communities. Students attending the game will be wearing their **G.R.E.A.T. "colors"** in honor of their achievements in remaining gang free. The students have learned the importance of becoming responsible members of their communities by setting goals, resisting pressures, learning how to resolve conflicts, and understanding how gangs impact the quality of their life.

Honored guests at this year's "**Tiger G.R.E.A.T. Day**" event are **ATF Director Bradley A. Buckles** and **The Honorable James E. Johnson, Under Secretary for Enforcement, Department of the Treasury** who will throw the **ceremonial pitch**. Other dignitaries in attendance will include Chief's of Police from various law enforcement agencies that have dedicated police officers that are actively teaching the G.R.E.A.T. Program within their school districts. The students attending this event are chaperoned by school administrators, teachers and volunteers. They are a representative sample of the approximately **33,942 kids** who have received instruction from **57 active police officers** from **34 agencies** throughout Michigan.

The **Gang Resistance Education And Training Program - - G.R.E.A.T. - -** was initiated in cooperation between the Phoenix, Arizona, Police Department and ATF in 1991 to deter youthful violence and crime by reducing involvement in gangs. ATF currently has numerous partnerships with local and state agencies, as well as the Boys and Girls Club of America. G.R.E.A.T. teachers are city, county, state and federal law enforcement officers. They teach elementary and middle school students about destructive consequences of gang membership.

Recreational and other community-outreach programs supplement the classroom instruction. The **goals of G.R.E.A.T. include:**

- 🕒☐ Reduce the incidence of violent youth crime
- 🕒☐ Resolve conflicts without resorting to violence
- 🕒☐ Provide youth with skills to make sound choices
- 🕒☐ Provide activities for G.R.E.A.T. graduates during summer months
- 🕒☐ Involve teachers, parents, and communities. Teach them to recognize indicators of gang involvement in their communities.

To date, approximately **4,298 officers** from over **1,500 agencies** representing **50 states**, the **District of Columbia, Canada, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Bermuda and military personnel from overseas bases** have been trained to present the core curriculum in elementary, middle school classrooms. The estimated cumulative number of students who have received the G.R.E.A.T. Program **exceeds 2 million**.

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Media representatives interested in **interviewing with ATF Director Buckles and/or Under Secretary Johnson regarding the Tiger G.R.E.A.T. Day event and the G.R.E.A.T. Program** may contact ATF PIO Vera Fedorak, @ (313) 201-4040 (pager).

The law enforcement agencies and communities within the State of Michigan which offer the G.R.E.A.T. Program to youth include the **Cities of Ann Arbor, Auburn Hills, Brownstown Township, Clawson, Detroit, Flat Rock, Hart, Holland, Huron Township, Inkster, Lincoln Park, Madison Heights, Milan, Northville Township, Redford Township, River Rouge, Romulus, Saginaw, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal, Southgate, Spring Lake-Ferrysburg, Taylor, and White Lake Township, Woodhaven;** and also include the **Counties of Leelanau, Macomb, Monroe, Muskegon, Oceana, Ottawa, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne,** as well as the Bureau of ATF.

Visit G.R.E.A.T. on the Web @ <http://www.atf.treas.gov/great/great.htm> for additional information.

<http://www.atf.treas.gov/field/detroit>